

National Aeronautics and Space Administration



SCIENCE

International Cooperation at NASA

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International Cooperation: Overview

- International cooperation at NASA:
 - Has been a cornerstone of NASA's activities throughout its history
 - Since 1958, NASA has concluded over 4000 agreements with over 100 nations and international organizations
 - Over 700 active international agreements
 - Cooperation now established with every region in the world
 - 8 partners account for 50% of the agreements
 - ESA, France, Germany, UK, Italy, Canada, Japan, Russia
 - Every Mission Directorate has international partnerships
 - By mission area: 2/3 of agreements are for NASA science missions



Why International Cooperation?

- Benefits of international cooperation:
 - Leverage resources (financial, technological, scientific, etc.)
 - Access foreign capabilities or geography
 - Adds unique capability and/or expertise
 - Increases mission flight opportunities
 - Enhances the scientific return
 - Promote U.S. foreign policy interests
 - NASA follows foreign policy guidance from the U.S. Department of State



Challenges to International Cooperation

- Management complexity
 - Decision-making is inherently more complex
 - Communication challenges
 - Differing specifications, standards and assumptions
- Technical and programmatic risk
 - Interdependence – someone is on the “critical path”
 - Interfaces are difficult to manage at a distance; it’s harder to monitor progress and get early warning of problems
 - Multiple partners with multiple interfaces adds complexity
- Political risk
 - Budgetary and bureaucratic uncertainties
 - Potential linkage to political activities unrelated to the cooperation



International Cooperation: Current Guidelines

- NASA international partners are generally government agencies due to the significant level of investment and legal requirements
- Each Partner funds its respective contributions, but contributions need not be equivalent
- Cooperation must be consistent with foreign policy objectives of each Partner
- Projects/Partnerships:
 - Must have scientific and technical merit and meet NASA program objectives
 - Must be mutually beneficial (demonstrate specific benefit to each Partner)
 - Are structured to protect against unwarranted technology transfer
 - Are structured to establish clearly defined managerial and technical interfaces to minimize complexity
 - Are documented in a written, binding agreement, closely coordinated with the U.S. Department of State and other U.S. government agencies as needed



Why Do We Need International Agreements?

- International Agreements are tools that:
 - Clarify responsibilities of the partners
 - Confirm commitments and terms
 - Document the quid pro quo and benefits of the cooperation
 - Protect investment and interests, such as:
 - Technical data rights
 - Intellectual property rights
 - Allocation of risk – cross-waiver of liability
 - Allow import/export of technical data and goods
 - Confirm arrangements to meet international obligations, such as UN Registration Convention, if necessary



When Do We Draft International Agreements?

- International Agreements are drafted *after* final selections are made; agreements are not typically drafted for Phase-A Studies
- International Agreements are not required for proposals or Concept Study Reports
- Non-U.S. Participation Requirements are detailed in sections 5.7 and 5.8 of the AO
- If the AO proposal is from a foreign entity – or if U.S. AO proposal includes foreign participation – a Letter of Commitment is needed from the foreign partner’s government agency or funding institution, acknowledging the activity and preferably indicating sufficient funds will be made available
- Note: International Agreements will likely take several months to put into place!



NASA's International Agreements

- NASA's International Agreements do **NOT** trump export control laws & regulations

An International Agreement does not replace a contractor's need for a Technical Assistance Agreement



Thank You

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